

VIRTUAL ASSISTANT IN A COMMUNICATION SESSION

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0001] The present technology pertains to communication sessions between groups of users, and more specifically pertains to utilizing a virtual assistant to assist one or more users perform tasks during a communication session.

BACKGROUND

[0002] Current computing devices can include functionality that enables users to communicate with each other by transmitting and receiving messages. For example, many computing devices include text and/or instant messaging functionality that enable users of the computing devices to transmit text, images, sounds, etc., to the client devices of one or more other users. Users can use this functionality to have conversations, make plans and/or perform any other number of tasks.

[0003] While current systems enable users to communicate and perform tasks, users are required to manually perform the tasks. For example, a group of users attempting to schedule lunch needs to determine an available day and time that works for each member of the group. This can require each user to check their calendar and share available times with other users. Likewise, a group of users attempting to perform a financial transaction needs to determine a payment method for performing the transaction. This can require each user to determine the payment methods available to the individual user and then share this data amongst the other members of the group. Accordingly, improvements are needed.

[0004] The present disclosure recognizes that the use of such personal information data, in the present technology, can be used to the benefit of users. For example, the personal information data can be used to deliver targeted content that is of greater interest to the user. Accordingly, use of such personal information data enables calculated control of the delivered content. Further, other uses for personal information data that benefit the user are also contemplated by the present disclosure.

[0005] The present disclosure further contemplates that the entities responsible for the collection, analysis, disclosure, transfer, storage, or other use of such personal information data will comply with well-established privacy policies and/or privacy practices. In particular, such entities should implement and consistently use privacy policies and practices that are generally recognized as meeting or exceeding industry or governmental requirements for maintaining personal information data private and secure. For example, personal information from users should be collected for legitimate and reasonable uses of the entity and not shared or sold outside of those legitimate uses. Further, such collection should occur only after receiving the informed consent of the users. Additionally, such entities would take any needed steps for safeguarding and securing access to such personal information data and ensuring that others with access to the personal information data adhere to their privacy policies and procedures. Further, such entities can subject themselves to evaluation by third parties to certify their adherence to widely accepted privacy policies and practices.

[0006] Despite the foregoing, the present disclosure also contemplates embodiments in which users selectively block the use of, or access to, personal information data. That is, the present disclosure contemplates that hardware and/or software elements can be provided to prevent or block access to such personal information data. For example, in the case of advertisement delivery services, the present technology can be configured to allow users to select to “opt in” or “opt out” of participation in the collection of personal information data during registration for services.

[0007] Therefore, although the present disclosure broadly covers use of personal information data to implement one or more various disclosed embodiments, the present disclosure also contemplates that the various embodiments can also be implemented without the need for accessing such personal information data. That is, the various embodiments of the present technology are not rendered inoperable due to the lack of all or a portion of such personal information data. For example, content can be selected and delivered to users by inferring preferences based on non-personal information data or a bare minimum amount of personal information, such as the content being requested by the device associated with a user, other non-personal information available to the content delivery services, or publically available information.

SUMMARY

[0008] Additional features and advantages of the disclosure will be set forth in the description which follows, and in part will be obvious from the description, or can be learned by practice of the herein disclosed principles. The features and advantages of the disclosure can be realized and obtained by means of the instruments and combinations particularly pointed out in the appended claims. These and other features of the disclosure will become more fully apparent from the following description and appended claims, or can be learned by the practice of the principles set forth herein.

[0009] Disclosed are systems, methods, and non-transitory computer-readable storage media for utilizing a virtual assistant as part of a communication session. A communication session can one or more communications transmitted amongst a group of participant users using a communication application. For example, a communication session can be a conversation between multiple users using a text and/or instant messaging application such as iMessage® available by Apple Inc., of Cupertino, Calif.

[0010] One or more of the participant users can select to utilize a virtual assistant to assist the participant users with tasks during the communication session. A virtual assistant can be an application, module, software, etc., capable of analyzing messages included in the communication session to identify tasks and provide assistance with completing the identified tasks. For example, a virtual assistant can be an application such as Siri® available by Apple Inc., of Cupertino, Calif., that uses semantic analysis to analyze text, recognize terms and interpret the intended meaning.

[0011] A task can be any type of action that a virtual assistant can provide assistance with. For example, a task can include scheduling a meeting, performing a financial transaction, determining an estimated time of arrival, providing directions, providing weather information, alerting a user of relevant information, etc.